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Revolution in Italy!

by Murray N. Rothbard

There is hope, hope for America. Despite our increasingly socialized polity, and our rapidly degenerating and crazed culture, there is hope. The first wonderful sign of hope was, of course, the total collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and East Europe. Of course, not all problems were solved by this collapse, but still who could have believed that totalitarian communism, seemingly all-powerful, headed by a one-party regime and backed by a huge and ruthless secret police, would need neither a bloody revolution nor a long, grueling march through the institutions to bring it down? Instead, it crumpled, suddenly, like a house of cards, like the proverbial one-hoss shay. After six decades in power, bam! Those of us who knew that socialism could not work, that it could not tackle its grave economic problems, knew as a consequence that the despair of most conservatives about Communism was wrong: that one day it would tumble down. But no one could predict how quickly the whole edifice would shatter. And if it can happen there, under monstrous Communism, why not here? Why couldn't the statist system crumple here as well?

Well, one problem was the seeming permanence and realism of democratic structures. The reply to this optimism went as follows: "Well, OK, Communism collapsed because it had a brittle one-party system that was vulnerable at the core. But remember, no "revolution": (which can mean either armed overthrow or a radical crumbling) has ever occurred in a "democracy." No radical collapse has ever occurred where there are free elections, a modicum of free speech and expression, and a two or multiparty system." This defense, whether one liked it or not, of the stability of democracy made a persuasive case. Even for those of us critical of the pretensions of democracy, it seemed that a limited ability to sound off, plus the severely restricted choice of two or more similar parties, provided enough of an outlet for frustrations to keep the system going and to channel public criticisms into harmless and marginal changes in the governing party. As the leftist critic of democratic forms (or what might be called "pluto-

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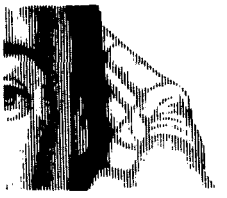

THE EAR

by Sarah Barton

A curtsy to the world's leading gossipist, Taki, of the real *Spectator* and *National Review* (where he's censored). In his British "High Life" column, Taki has dubbed Clinton "the Great Pants Dropper." It should be Bill's permanent moniker.

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"According to the Bible," the Great Pants Dropper told the Arkansas troopers, a married man who has oral sex with other women isn't committing adultery. Now I see that the promiscuous coke-head Chuck Robb, whom Ollie North will trounce for the Senate in Virginia, has virtually the same view, according to memos from his own staff.

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Congrats to Howie Phillips for listing the neocons and left-libertarians who lent major financial support to Jim Miller over Ollie North. They include: Elliott Abrams, Rich Bond, Bill Buckley, Frank Carlucci, Larry Eagleburger, Richie Fink, Boyden Gray, Manny Johnson, Chuck Koch, Dave Koch, Liz Koch, KOCHPAC, Don Regan, and George Schultz.

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A piece of advice, dear reader: never subscribe to a neocon magazine because it ran one good article. The latest issue of the *American Spectator,* all too typical, includes a diatribe by two foreign lobbyists, an endorsement of the evil Kissinger by editor R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr., Tyrrell's loopy praise of Nixon as another Hubert Humphrey, "though more interesting," and the photo gallery from Hell (taken at the latest *AS* dinner). Among the assembled social democracy: Elliott Abrams wearing a scowl, Tyrrell wearing a medal (the Order of Bourbon?), and a bigshot neocon, his own trophy wife safely across the room, leering at a colleague's. Ah yes, official conservatism.

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Beltway trends: Taco has become Gatto (not to be confused with Gayto).

democracy"), Herbert Marcuse used to put it, the system, by allowing us a veneer of free speech and free choice, locked us into a captive statist system by a method of "repressive tolerance."

But then, last winter, something happened. For the first time, a major, indeed governing, political party in a functioning democracy, simply folded, collapsed, bam! I speak of course of our neighbor to the north, Canada. On the night of the Canadian election I called up a Canadian friend of mine to inquire about the results. "You know," he said, that the [ruling] Progressive Conservative party had a margin of [something like] 150 seats in Parliament?" "Yes." "Well," he continued, "the Progressive Conservatives are now down to 2 seats." "Wow!" I replied, "that's a real landslide! From a margin of 150 seats to a margin of only 2 seats!" "No," he cut in sharply, "not a *margin* of 2 seats. 2 seats *period*!"

For the first time, a major political party in a functioning democracy simply folded, collapsed, bam!

Just like that! Finished! The Progressive Conservatives, led by the glamorous female Kim Campbell as Prime Minister, were wiped out, with Mrs. Campbell losing her seat.

Canadian politics had been fully as boring and as hopeless as our own. Three major parties: the Liberals, equivalent to Left Clintonians in the U.S.; the Progressive Conservatives, equivalent to centrist Clintonians; and frankly and openly socialist New Democrats. What a choice! Or rather, to hark back to the old Goldwater slogan, what a series of echoes! But while the Liberals of course assumed power in this last election, the Progressive Conservative collapse was matched by the rise of two new parties: the Bloc Quebecois, pushing for separatism and independence for French-speaking Quebec; and the brand new Reform Party, based in Western Canada, and enjoying only one seat less in Parliament than the Quebecers. The Reform Party is great news: it may best be described as a Paleo Party: for drastic cuts in taxes and expenditures, for privatization, and for getting the welfare state East off the backs of the prosperous free-market and populist West. And they are for immigration restriction against a horde of welfare clients who would inevitably wreck English-

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speaking Canadian culture.

The Reform Party, in short, is Our Party in Canada, skyrocketing to a powerful opposition to Liberal rule. Between the Reformers and the Quebeckers, the dreary collectivist, inflationist welfare statist tyranny of Ottawa might be broken into its constituent parts, and both liberty and separatism might reign in the old Canadian realm. And perhaps "Canada", at least as we know it, might go the way of "Yugoslavia" and the "Soviet Union," down into the dustbin of history.

Canada was the first sign that even a democratic polity can crumble quickly. But even more exciting is the recent March 27-28 election in Italy. For, even more thoroughly than in Canada, where the bad old Liberal Party remains in power, the entire Italian political system, the system of virtually one-party Christian Democrat rule that was crafted and fastened upon the Italian political system in 1948, this vicious and corrupt tyranny of centrist, statist *partitocrazia* (party-ocracy) has fallen apart, and crumbled into ashes. The seemingly all-powerful Christian Democracy, ruling for a half-century, simply is no more. Even its renamed successor parties (the Italian People's Party and the smaller Pact for Italy) are virtually off the charts.

The thing that tore it was corruption, massive, mammoth corruption, involving every level of government from top to bottom. Italy had become, in the common parlance, a veritable *Tangentopoli* (Kickback City). Vigorish and bribes to parties and political leaders alike was endemic.

For decades, all Italians knew this was going on, and shrugged cynically. But then, in the last couple of years, what every Italian knew deep in his heart became all too glaringly evident. Big shot political leaders, mayors, judges, were sent to jail on a massive scale. And suddenly, as if the public had reached their tipping point and simply got fed up, it all shattered, and the monstrous Christian Democracy, along with its tame Socialist Party, simply disappeared. The Italian public had had enough, and peacefully but forcefully, threw the rascals out. So broken were the Christian Democrats and Socialists that they faded out without even daring to face the voters under their original name and form.

In 1948, when it looked as if the Communists would win the Italian elections, the CIA and the U.S.A. poured millions in dollars and propaganda into stopping the Communists and installing the Christian Democrats. The Communist Party had ridden in on the backs of the U.S. and Allied crushing of the Italian fascist forces, with Communists acquiring the glamor of their alleged (mostly phony) partisan or guerrilla activities against the Fascist government and the later German occupation force.

With the Center collapsing, and the Right seemingly nonexistent, everyone believed that the Communists, refurbished and renamed as a "Social Democratic" Democratic Party of the Left, would come to power in the late March Italian elections. Because of a shift from proportional representation to single-winner districts, the "ex" Communists faced the voters as leaders of a Progressive Alliance, which included a small hard-line Communist Party called the "Communists Refounded". It looked very much that, nearly a half-century after the Communists had been turned back at the pass, they would now, suitably cleaned up, buttoned down, and renamed, finally come to power in Italy.

The "Freedom Alliance" of the Right

Just as the Left prepared to romp to power, however, Fate stepped in to save the day. Dynamic media billionaire, Silvio Berlusconi, was determined to keep the "ex" Communists from coming to power in Italy. Berlusconi has been inaptly called the "Italian Perot"; in his ownership of three TV networks and publishing houses, he is closer to Rupert Murdoch. The big difference is that he is a dedicated free-marketeer, far more principled than Murdoch, more consistent than Perot. In a remarkable feat deployed at the last minute, Berlusconi started

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from scratch, creating a new political party, Forza Italia (Go, Italy) in January of this year, sweeping to victory only two months later in the March elections.

How did Berlusconi do it? With money of course, with bold use of his TV networks and media empire, and with bright young marketing and managerial experts from his conglomerate Fininvest. His campaign manager and party organizer, Roberto Lasagna, was the Italian head of the famed ad agency, Saatchi & Saatchi, and the name of his party is a popular Italian chant at national soccer matches. (Berlusconi himself owns Milan A.C., one of the best soccer teams in Europe.)

Forza Italia could not have won the Italian elections alone; instead, Berlusconi shrewdly put together a tripartite coalition of the Right, the Freedom Alliance. There are many tensions and strains within this alliance, as there would be in any right-wing coalition, and for a while it looked as if the Alliance would fall apart before it could enjoy its smashing majority in the March elections. But fortunately, the Alliance hung together, and Berlusconi is slated to be the first Premier of what amounts to Italy's "Second Republic". Briefly, the other Alliance members are the Northern League, the party of northern Italian autonomy or secession; and the National Alliance, the so-called "neo-fascists", who are weak in the North and are strong in the South and Central regions of Italy. Forza Italia, on the other hand, is more of a national party than the others. The three parties complement each other regionally. Ideologically, as we shall see below, the two parties both complement each other and conflict on many issues.

But about one thing we can be confident: the Freedom Alliance is tough-minded and hard-nosed. Defying the corrupt Italian custom of letting the "loyal opposition" have the two top legislative seats of Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and President of the Senate, the victorious Freedom Alliance used its political muscle to squeak through its own candidates for these two posts, to the anguished squeals of the disappointed Left.

Berlusconi's Economic Guru

Central to Berlusconi's plans is his chief economic guru and long-time close adviser, Professor Antonio Martino, who has become Foreign Minister in the new Italy. The fiftyish Martino is a leading member of the international free-market economic group, the Mont Pelerin Society. Although a former student of Milton Friedman at the University of Chicago, and a former Heritage Foundation fellow, Martino is far friendlier to the Austro-libertarian minority within Mont Pelerin than are most other members of the moderate free-market Friedman-Feulner power elite in the Society. (The Austro-libertarian wing of Mont Pelerin is centered in Spain and Latin America.)

Martino wants to go far and fast toward rescuing Italy from its limping status as an inflationary welfare state. He wants, in the first place, drastic tax cuts. Marginal income tax rates are to be cut radically, in the upper brackets, and the number of income tax brackets are to be slashed from seven to one. Taxes on the poor are to be eliminated by means of large increases in personal deductions. Hard money and ending deficits to slash inflation would also stop eroding the savings of the poor, and the abolition of brackets would put an end to the cruel practice of inflating people into higher tax brackets while the rates seemingly remain the same. Martino hopes, in the supply-side manner, to induce more people to pay taxes by lowering the tax rates (Italians are famous for their systemic tax evasion), thereby increasing or at least maintaining total revenue. While supply-side maneuvers usually don't work, in a land as highly taxed as Italy, it might well succeed. Certainly, in any case, the Italian producers and the economy will be enormously better off.

In addition, Martino wants to topple the entire complex and horrendous tax structure, by slashing the number of Italian taxes from 200 to 10. Ever-rising

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government expenditures are to be curbed by massive privatization, including the schools and national health insurance. Moreover, Forza Italia is determined to cut into the gigantic parasitic bureaucracy that has been strangling economic and social life in Italy. In Italy, the rascals cannot be kicked out, even on the higher levels as they are in the United States; once someone gets a bureaucratic job, no matter how high up, he is safely ensconced for life. The Forza aim to whittle at the staying power of the bureaucracy by dwindling the number of lifetime jobs, and subjecting the executive branch to a good dose of what has often been derided as "the spoils system," but which really means allowing the voters to kick out bureaucrats they don't like (The "spoils system"—i.e. genuine democracy in government—was installed by Jacksonian Democrats in the U.S., and continued until the goo-goo civil service reformers began to encroach upon the throw-out-the-rascals process in the 1880s.)

The "spoils system"—i.e. genuine democracy in government—was installed by Jacksonian Democrats in the U.S.

The Northern League wants three separate and autonomous (if not seceding) regions in Italy: the North, Center, and South, plus other peripheral regions such as Val d'Aosta and Alto Adige. The idea is for each region to tax and spend only in its own area. Thereby, for the Northern League, the leeching of the parasitic welfare-state South upon the productive and prosperous North will cease, as will the "imperialism" of the massive bureaucracy of the Center, headquartered in Rome. Unfortunately, and this is one of the tensions within the Freedom Alliance, Berlusconi and Martino think as centralists; *they* want regional fiscal and administrative autonomy not because they think in terms of several nations but merely for the efficiency and localism that decentralization brings. The Forza, accordingly, plan on 25-50 fiscally autonomous regions within *one Italian nation*, whereas the Northern League wants regional autonomy because they know that Italy is and can never be one nation, but only three or more separate and distinct nations, which differ culturally, linguistically, and ethnically.

This unfortunate blindness to separate nationalisms underscores one of the major problems of 19th century classical liberalism. Modern libertarians like to call themselves "classical liberals", heirs of nineteenth century free-market liberalism. This homage is generally true, but applied to liberalism in Europe, especially in the Catholic countries of Europe, it glosses over two major and grievous errors of classical liberalism: (1) its opposition to Christianity in general, and to the Catholic Church in particular; and (2) its overweening centralism, in the name of "efficiency", and its willingness to ride roughshod over the rights and liberties of separate and particular regions and "nations." In short, in several crucial ways, classical liberals weren't "paleo" enough, and were mired in the early stages of cultural Leftism. Thus, the organizers of a unified Italy in the nineteenth century were classical liberals such as Cavour, who were blinded by anti-Catholicism, and by a centralizing dismissal of the many nations within the overall "Italian" rubric.

The Heroic Paleos: the Northern League

These deficiencies of centralizing classical liberalism do not disfigure my personal favorite among the three members of the Freedom Alliance: the Northern League, which grew out of the remarkably fast-growing "League" movement in North-

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ern Italy. The League began in Lombardy, as the Lombard League, the proclaimed heir of the Lombard autonomous movement of the 12th century. Soon, the League concept spread to other regions of the thrifty, entrepreneurial and prosperous North, later to amalgamate into the Northern League. The dynamic leader of the Northern League is Senator Umberto Bossi; major theoretician is Professor Gianfranco Miglio. The Northern League is separatist, bitterly critical of southern welfare parasites and Roman centralism, is staunchly free-market in economics (its leaders have read and admire Ludwig von Mises), is staunchly bourgeois in social makeup, and favors immigration restrictions against welfare moochers from the south and elsewhere. Bossi's candidate for premier during the post-election jockeying within the alliance is his friend, attorney Roberto Maroni, who has been granted the crucial post of Minister of the Interior.

The Northern League did extremely well in the north, but is understandably weak electorally in other regions, even though it tries to promote similar Leagues in other regions of Italy. Its biggest weakness, apart from regional limits, has been its shaky relationship with the Catholic Church; Bossi, for example, like many Italian males, is only a once and possibly future Catholic. Married and divorced, he is not a Catholic communicant. In a brilliant political masterstroke, however, Bossi found and elevated to a high position in the party the brilliant and determined young Catholic activist, Irene Pivetti, who is the League's Opening to the Church.

Irene Pivetti is magnificent, the Paleos' kind of female leader. Only 31 years old, Ms. Pivetti graduated from the Universita Sacre Cuore with honors, and worked as a fiery and tough journalist for the Catholic activist group Aclil. After she wrote a bitter article denouncing critics of the Northern League, Bossi found her and elevated her to party spokeswoman on Catholic affairs. And now, after Maroni turned down the post, the Freedom Alliance has named Irene Pivetti Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, one of the youngest in that post in Italian history.

No sooner did Ms. Pivetti achieve her high post, when the U.S. and other Western media began to attack her as...."anti-Semitic!" Isn't it remarkable that, in discussing the political scene of any country in Europe, or indeed in the entire world, the only issue that seems to exercise the American and Western media is the "Jewish Question", even in a country that contains very few Jews, and where Jews are not an issue. Why do you suppose that is?

It turns out that there are two groundings for this absurd smear, which Ms. Pivetti has denounced as "foolish". One is that Ms. Pivetti is a traditional (that is, a genuine) Catholic, described by the dopey reporter for the *New York Times* as a "Catholic fundamentalist" (There ain't no such thing. "Fundamentalists" are pre-millennial dispensationalist Protestants. Period. What he means is: *real* Catholic). Because she is a genuine Catholic, Ms. Pivetti, with typical candour, denounced the heretical act of Pope John Paul II in hailing Judaism as Christianity's "elder brother", and elevating the Chief Rabbi of Italy to a status as exalted as himself. Ms. Pivetti declared that she "cannot regard a false religion as our 'elder brother.'"

In the Western media version of Alice-in-Wonderland, of course, any Christian who regards all other religions as false (i.e. all *genuine* Christians) is denounced *ipso facto* as "anti-Semitic." In short, the media/secularist's version of a "good Christian" (i.e. a non-anti-Semite) is a Christian who regards his religion as one among a large number of co-equals in some ghastly egalitarian and "non-discriminatory" spiritual grab-bag, none better or truer than another. After all, someone's "feelings" might get hurt otherwise. (Hey, where's The Inquisition now that we need it?)

The second spurious piece of evidence of Irene Pivetti's "anti-Semitism" is her praise of Mussolini's policy on women, i.e. his anti-feminism, and his belief that women's place was as

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mothers in the home. As Ms. Pivetti said, while she is not pro-fascist, she could "see all the good things fascism did for Italy." In particular, she added, "Mussolini had the most advanced policy towards women", that is, anti-feminism. What does all this have to do with "anti-Semitism"? See below.

Irene Pivetti is bound to be a superstar in Italian politics. When she ran her first race for Parliament in 1992, she ran under the slogan, "Your spirit for God, your vote for the League." Her nickname now is *la Papessa* (the "female Pope"), and her friends regard her as the League's Joan of Arc.

The "Neo-fascists"

The third, and of course the most dreaded by the Western media, constituent of the Freedom Alliance is the National Alliance, a renamed and reconstituted "neo-fascist" party that, until its current leader Gianfranco Fini took it over in 1991, was known for four decades as the Italian Social Movement. The dynamic young Fini changed its name and modified its "neo-fascist" ideology, changing its nostalgic devotion to the fascist corporate state into a kind of moderate free-market party, strong in central and southern Italy.

Whenever the word "neo-fascist" is uttered, or nostalgic devotion is accorded to the Fascist founder Mussolini, the Western media, once again, know and yell about only one thing: "anti-Semitism." What *else* is or was "fascism?" Who knows? Who cares? In truth, the fascists were never anti-Semitic; indeed, there were always many Jews high up in the Fascist party. In fact, anti-Semitism has never been a factor in Italy, period. It was only with the approach and waging of World War II that the German Nazis were able to push the Italians, with great reluctance, into an anti-Jewish policy. As the eminent historian Roland N. Stromberg wrote in a letter to the *New York Times*, protesting the usual nonsense about Mussolini as "anti-Semite, responsible for the deportation of thousands of Italian Jews to Nazi death camps": "The Italian government did not turn a single Jew over to the Germans despite great pressure, and 85 percent of the Italian Jews survived even though the Nazis took control of northern Italy in 1943." (*New York Times*, April 13).

The first thing we have to do is rid ourselves of Comintern propaganda.

So if anti-Semitism was not on the agenda, what in the world *was* "fascism" about anyway? What was its program? The first thing we have to do is to rid ourselves of the very successful Comintern propaganda, adopted in the Popular Front period of the late 1930s, and embraced since then by Menshevik social democracy as well: that *all* right-wing parties in Europe, from Nazis to Rexists to Hungarian Horthyites, were simply branches of international "fascism", so that the Nazis were merely "German fascists." Hence, a battle against Hitler or against Japan in World War II, became a crusade against "international fascism," with the noble "anti-fascist" crusaders, of course, including Bolsheviks and Mensheviks alike. And now that Bolshevism has fallen apart, our neocon/Official Con/social democrats would like nothing better than to revive the "anti-fascist coalition".

In reality, fascism in Italy, and the European right generally, cannot be understood except as a vigorous reaction against the aftermath of World War I. That monstrous and destructive war discredited the European system—statism and imperialism—that gave rise to that cataclysmic conflict. But taking advantage of the post-World War I

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chaos and starvation, the Left: Communist, Social Democrat, and Anarcho-Syndicalist, made hay under these conditions, blaming "capitalism" for the war, and calling for its revolutionary overthrow by these various forms of communist and nihilist egalitarianism. For a while after the war, it was touch and go, and it looked as if Germany, the Baltics, Hungary, and Italy, would succumb to this destructive Left revolution. The Right-wing in each European country grew as a militant reaction against the revolutionary Left; it was a largely successful attempt to defend and conserve existing institutions: the family, the Church, the nation, and private property, from the wave of revolutionary destructionism.

All of these hard Right movements were conservative and counter-revolutionary defenses against the crazed Left.

All of these hard Right movements were conservative and counter-revolutionary defenses against the crazed Left. In Italy, the Left meant Communists, as well as general strikes promoted by anarcho-syndicalism. The militant Fascist movement succeeded in saving Italy from two monstrous evils: revolutionary Communism and revolutionary anarcho-syndicalism. This preservation and defense was its great achievement.

Was Fascism perfect? Obviously not. Actually, in its early years, under the aegis of Mussolini's free- market Minister of Finance, Alberto di Stefano, the Fascists succeeded in cutting the budget, slashing taxes, and privatizing much of State industry. Unfortunately, by the mid-1920s, the National-syndicalist wing of Fascism triumphed, di Stefano was kicked out, and Italian Fascism embarked on a most unfortunate career of economic statism, virtually inventing the "corporate state", which soon came to America in the form of the Roosevelt New Deal. The corporate state (*stato corporativo*) was born in all the major warring nations in the War Collectivism of World War I. The idea was for Big Government to organize industry into a series of cartels, with industry run by tripartite delegations from Big Business trade associations, Big Unions (the "National syndics"), and Big Government public officials. The tripartite bureaucracies would then fix prices, wages, and production of each industry, arbitrate labor disputes, provide a welfare state for the masses, etc. It is no wonder that in the Brain Trust of the early days of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, the Brain Trusters were heavily influenced by the recently translated writings of the Italian Fascist theoretician Giovanni Gentile.

If all this sounds familiar, it should be: for this is the economic policy of the New Deal and the United States ever since.

Furthermore, Fascist foreign policy was also akin to modern Wilsonian-Rooseveltian-neocon imperialism. A worshiper of the central Roman state, Mussolini wished to Bring Back the Good Old Days of the Roman Empire, and hence foisted on Italy a dopey bush-league version of imperialism, successfully conquering the slave state of Ethiopia, and catching Hell for this feat from the New Deal crusaders for Global Democracy and "collective security against aggression."

Thus, the good thing about Fascism was that it saved Italy from the terrible ravages of Marxism and anarcho-syndicalism; the bad thing was its economic statism and its foreign policy of imperialism—both features where our enemies: leftists, Mensheviks, neocons, Official Cons, etc. are far closer to fascism than we paleos are. Thus, the next time some leftist or Menshevik hisses "fascist!" at you, you would be fully justified in hissing back,

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and double in spades.

Fast forward to the present-day, and we now have a National Alliance [N.A.] more or less purged of corporate state policies. However, the N.A. is still considerably more statist than its two allies; it wishes to hang on to some state industry and not privatize it, it insists on clinging to central Roman imperialism and bureaucracy over the national regions; and, idiotically, it still wants to return to Roman imperial glory by reconquering the parts of Slovenia and Croatia that Italy managed to grab as a result of World War I, and had to relinquish after World War II. I don't think, however, that anyone need seriously worry about an Italian "threat" to Slovenia and Croatia, a danger just about as clear and present as Zhirinovsky's call for taking back Alaska. On the other hand, of course, the National Alliance has as its star politician the beauteous Alessandra Mussolini, granddaughter of Il Duce. Alessandra, niece of the illustrious Sophia Loren and who is a younger version of her aunt, is the paleo's kind of "feminist," and just about the best thing in the N.A.

Tension in the Alliance

A coalition of three such feisty and disparate hard right forces is bound to suffer from tensions and inner conflicts, and the alliance leaders denounced each other all during the campaign, and almost didn't get their act together to form a Cabinet. The biggest clash is between the Northern League's regional separatism and the National Alliance's devotion to the centralized Roman State. Otherwise, many of the discussions and debates within the alliance sound like a more hostile version of discussions within the John Randolph Club! Thus: Berlusconi and Martino's Forza Italia want to privatize State industries and operations; whereas the Northern League is worried about a formal "privatization" that will, as in Russia and Eastern Europe, go into the hands of the old corrupt State managerial class. The Leaguers also worry about privatizing into the hands of Japanese and other multinationals; hence, the League prefers to talk about "localization" and not just privatization of State functions. Less serious is the defection from the Forza Italia leadership of heroic young female ex-judge Tiziana Parenti, who helped prosecute corruption and resigned from the old government in protest at their shelving her inquiries into crookery by the "ex" Communist party. La Parenti, who had been slated to become minister of justice in a Berlusconi cabinet, has denounced Berlusconi's "personal dictatorship" over the party. (What did she expect?)

But these are all growing pains and creative tensions within a suddenly burgeoning movement. One important point: Umberto Bossi has given Berlusconi six months to transform the constitution of Italy from a centralized State to a genuinely federalist one; and we can all hope that he succeeds.

The Other Europe

There is another hopeful force arising in Europe, and one that fits in well with the

Quotes That Need No Comment

You could write an article about the horrors of Russian supermarkets, just by going to our supermarkets here [in New York City]. The mess. The lines. The filth! And everybody is very, very rude.—Karen Iless, culinary historian, *New York Times*

The "reform" [Yegor] Gaidar gave out was brainless. I refuse to recognize that this is reform. ....He freed prices while monopolies were still intact, enabling them to charge whatever they wanted while reducing production.—Alexsandr Solzhenitsyn, *New York Times*

She [Hillary] certainly got favored and preferential treatment. Somebody else put up the money to finance her trades. [Asked if others could get similar treatment] No way-not unless you're my sister and I own the firm.—Chuck Levitt, senior livestock analyst at Alaron Trading Corp., Chicago, *New York Post*

It is immoral and unethical to encourage more war in Bosnia. As for a multicultural Bosnia, it won't work because people no longer want it.—Conservative French writer Guy Sorman, reacting against pro-war agitation by Bernard-Henri Levy and other French intellectuals, *New York Times*

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rise of the Forza Italia. For decades, one of the sinister developments in Europe has been the burgeoning of a regional Euro-bureaucracy of European managers and administrators, of a European State that will be accountable to no one, neither taxpayers, nations nor voters. This monstrosity has grown like topsy, adding layer after layer of European Community economic regulation, of Maastricht currency regulations, all designed to march toward the goal of one supranational Euro-government, to submerge all the wonderful particular nationalities of Europe into a monstrous, denatured, statist, and cartelized "One Europe", dominated by one tyrannical, multicultural, multiethnic government, issuing one paper currency. This horrendous Euro-ideal is, of course, precisely the ideal of our New World Order left-liberals, neoconservative Mensheviks, and Rockefeller multinationals: that is, a super-One World Government built upon such regional Euro-governments as its building blocks. Hence, the enthusiasm with which the U.S. liberal/centrist/neocon/Official Con Establishment greets every step along the path to regional, and eventually, world government.

Every fibre of the being of every paleo yearns to disrupt, to block, to smash the march toward this World Government. Unfortunately, the Thatcher wing of nationalistic British Tories have been so far submerged by the Euro-Major liberals or "wets". Fortunately, on the other hand, economic realities managed to break apart the European Currency Union before it could unite on a single currency, or even on a single set of fixed exchange rates, Britain being forced to leave the Union. But still it is touch and go.

Up till now, opposition to Eurocracy has been scattered, confined to dissidents in each nation (such as Britain and Denmark) and unorganized.

Now, however, there is good news. The formidable English billionaire Sir James Goldsmith, who resides in Paris, has thrown his energies into organizing a determined anti-Eurocracy movement. On April 22, "Sir Jimmy's" brainchild, *L'Autre Europe* (The Other Europe), was organized, signing a Declaration of Paris in a solemn ceremony at the George V Hotel. The Paris accord commits its signatories to fight implacably for a new Europe—or rather for the Old Europe—of sovereign states. Just as Pat Buchanan and the paleos want to Take America Back to restore the Old Republic, *L'Autre Europe* is determined to Take Europe Back, to restore the Old Europe, what General de Gaulle called *L'Europe des patries* (A Europe of Fatherlands.) Goldsmith, who at 61 has retired from high finance, is devoting himself to this great cause. His *L'Autre Force* intends to battle for seats in the next elections to the European Parliament, and it feels it can take 30 seats at the first try. Goldsmith recently wrote a runaway best seller in French, *Le Piege* (The Trap), which sold 100,000 copies. This 200-page book is anti-Maastricht, anti-Gatt, anti-Brussels, anti-Eurocracy.

As Sir Jimmy explains his position: I believe in "a Europe built on a base of nations, and not a United States of Europe. History shows that an excess of centralization of power always unleashes a reaction of dangerous centrifugal forces. Belgium, Italy, and Yugoslavia, artificially created states, are in full explosion. A vote for Maastricht is the best way to destroy Europe—the appetite of Brussels for bureaucratic power is so voracious it will sooner or later boomerang."

A running mate of Goldsmith's on the anti Maastricht list is the conservative Catholic French politician Philippe de Villiers. In Germany, the major *L'Autre Force* leader is Manfred Brunner, leader of the Bund Freier Burger (the League of Free Burghers).

How does the new Italy fit into this picture? Because a Berlusconi Italy is expected to abandon the old Christian Democrat enthusiasm for One Europe, and to join the ranks of *L'Autre Force*. Sir Jimmy states that "it looks very much as if the Italian government...will be anti Maastricht." In particular, Antonio Martino, Berlusconi's Austro-libertarian economist, is a long-time "Euro-skeptic"; Martino was the only Italian

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founding member of the Bruges Group —an organization set up to counter One Europe along nationalistic Thatcherite lines.

We can see, rising out of the mist, out of this ferment, a new Nationalist International, a Right-wing International, a Fifth International, an international of disparate and sovereign nationalities, each free and independent, each on its own land. Contrary to popular notions, there is nothing at all contradictory about a nationalist international, a free and genuine comity of sovereign nations.■

We can see, rising out of the mist, a new Nationalist International, a Right-wing International.

The Franciscan Way

A review of Samuel Francis, *Beautiful Losers: Essays on the Failure of American Conservatism* (University of Missouri Press, 1993), 237 pp.

by M. N. R.

In the Introduction to this brilliant collection of essays, Dr. Samuel Francis crystallizes one of his unique contributions to modern conservative thought. Since World War II, he points out, conservative intellectuals and theorists (and this would be true in spades for libertarians) have concentrated on what ideas *should* be adopted in society. In the famous phrase of Old Rightist Richard Weaver, "Ideas Have Consequences." Of course, Sam Francis concedes, but what they have all neglected are the crucial questions: *what* and *who* decides *which* ideas get adopted, to generate those consequences? As Francis puts it, with his typical blend of powerful reasoning and mordant wit: "Ideas do have consequences, but some ideas have more consequences than others, and which consequences ensue from which ideas is settled not simply because the ideas serve human reason through their logical implications but also because some ideas serve human interests and emotions through their attachment to drives for political, economic, and social power, while other ideas do not." (p.3).

Realistic Analysis First

Which ideas get adopted, in short, is not simply a matter of pure reason in behalf of moral principle or of what system of laws or institutions will best serve society. It is more often a matter of whose interests will be best served in a drive for political power. As the late Max Lerner put it in the title of a book written during his overtly Leftist period: *Ideas Are Weapons*.

Thus, whereas most conservative and libertarian intellectuals, including his two fellow paleo syndicated columnists, Joe Sobran and Pat Buchanan, are grounded in a moralistic tradition of political *philosophy*, Sam Francis brings to us the fruits of a quite different tradition in Western thought: realistic, hard-boiled political *analysis*. This is the tradition pioneered by the notorious Machiavelli, developed by the great turn-of-the twentieth century Italian political theorists Vilfredo Pareto and Gaetano Mosca, and brought to modern conservatism by James Burnham, on whose political thought Sam Francis has written a previous volume. It is a tradition crystallized in by far the best thing V.I. Lenin ever wrote: the title to one of his numerous essays: *Who? Whom?* In other words: in analyzing politics or any actions of the State, the crucial question to ask is *who* is shafting *whom?* Or, to put it in the language of modern game theory, politics is a "zero-sum game," and so all State action is a process by which winners can only benefit at the expense of losers. As a result, while moralistic political philosophers think or write in terms of moral

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principle, natural law, the common good, or the public interest, realistic analysts are concentrating on the question of who are the winners and who the losers, and very often, planning and scheming how to join the ranks of the winners and avoid falling into the category of losers.

The Necessity for Strategy

In short, whereas moralists concentrate on developing and spreading the proper ideas and trying to convince people of their truth and merit, analysts are rather trying to figure out what's really happening in the world and to develop a *strategy* to put proper ideas into effect and embody them in institutions.

One of the frustrating aspects of being a conservative or libertarian over the years is the lack of strategic thinking endemic in these movements. After these intellectuals and activists go to the trouble of arriving at their convictions of what ideas to adopt and carry forward, their "strategy" invariably becomes the simple one of spreading the gospel to whoever will listen, of spreading the word without bothering to develop a strategy of how to develop a *movement* that will carry those ideas to victory. And the result of any movement that stresses ideas without strategy is inevitably a movement, as Sam Francis emphasizes in the title to this scintillating collection, of *Beautiful Losers.*

By "winners" and "losers", it must be emphasized, Sam Francis is talking about long-run triumph or loss for a movement's basic principles, *not* about short-run tactics. Indeed, he makes clear that one of the main reasons for the disastrous decline of American conservatism in the midst of its alleged triumph of the 1980s was precisely a total forgetting of its own principles in the midst of its overwhelming absorption in the minutiae of tactics, of the "process" of achieving such paltry and short-sighted goals as winning the next presidential election and securing government jobs and favors. By this shortening of range, the "Official" conservatives and their ideological and political leadership succumbed to the basic premises and the "culture" of Left-liberalism. In this fatal transformation, the conservatives were led by the "neoconservatives." As Francis puts it, "much of what neoconservatives are concerned with is merely process...and not with the ultimate goals themselves, about which there is little debate with those parts of the Left that also lie within the permissible range of 'pluralistic' dialogue." And Francis goes on, "Given the persistent cultural dominance of the Left, a conservatism that limits itself merely to procedural problems tacitly concedes the goals of public action to its enemies and quietly comes to share the premises on which the goals of the Left rest." (223-24).

Sam Francis brings to us the fruits of a quite different tradition in Western thought: realistic, hard-boiled political *analysis.*

The Inevitability and Clash of Elites

Sam Francis is the paleo right's foremost political analyst and strategic thinker. To understand his strategic counsel we must first understand the essence of his political analysis. From the great Italian political theorists Pareto and Mosca, as well as from their Swiss contemporary Robert Michels, Francis absorbed the "Iron Law of Oligarchy": that is, that regardless of any egalitarian or "democratic" pretense, every organization, whatever its nature, from a central government down to the local chess club, will inevitably be run by a small elite of its most able, interested, and energetic members. That is simply a law of nature, and any claim

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otherwise is simply propaganda for suckers. Similarly, in government, there is always and inevitably, as Mosca put it, a "ruling class." Pareto, the most brilliant of the three and the only one who was a knowledgeable and excellent political economist, then developed the insight that the important thing for social prosperity and progress is that the ruling elites "circulate," that they not get frozen into a domination that is increasingly out of step, retrogressive, and counterproductive. Pareto realized that the only way in which elites can truly circulate is in the free market economy, which encourages and reflects innovations and adaptations of dynamic entrepreneurs. Government, on the other hand, tends to become the haven of coercive, stagnant, and frozen elites. Therefore, for both Pareto and Mosca, the governmental or political ruling class should be kept as limited and as powerless as possible, to allow maximum scope for freedom and entrepreneurial change.

The "Revolution" of the Managerial Elites

Francis's immediate intellectual though not actual mentor, James Burnham, brought the analysis of circulating and clashing elites up to date with his once-famous thesis of the "Managerial Revolution"—that previous middle-class, property owning, or "bourgeois" elites have, in the twentieth century, been replaced by a new, rising "revolutionary" elite consisting of the technocratic-and-managerial class, a congenial interlocking network of corporate managers, government bureaucrats, and technocratic experts on all sorts of modern technologies from engineering to "public administration" to the politics and administration as well as the actual provision of "health care," and on and on. Nowadays, this network especially features "therapists," shrinks, counselors, and sensitivity trainers of all sorts, in what Paul Gottfried has well called "the therapeutic state." And through it all and above all, there is the host of "intellectuals" provided by the mass public education system, who are eager to acquire cushy jobs and prestige in both staffing the technocratic and therapeutic state, and in holding posts of education, media, and public relations, in and out of formal government, to apologize for the burgeoning statism and collectivism, and to call for ever more of the same. Burnham, writing his *The Managerial Revolution* after leaving the Trotskyite movement in 1941, brilliantly saw the rising collectivism of the age: Communism, Nazism, Fascism, and the New Deal, as different manifestations of the same phenomenon: the takeover of power from private property owners by the new managerial elite.

In his critique of Irving Kristol's concept of the "New Class" (in his 1986 essay in this volume, "Neoconservatism and the Managerial Revolution"), Francis (who, by the way, is subtly nuanced and remarkably perceptive in his discussions of such conservative thinkers and writers as Kristol, Burnham, Kendall, and Chambers) points out that (a) Kristol and the neoconservatives do not want to abolish or limit the power of the New Class but rather to become the New Class themselves; and (b) Kristol leaves out the corporate managers from the governing New Class of intellectuals, therapists, social scientists, and bureaucrats. Francis might also have pointed out that Burnham, as well as his neo-Marxist follower C. Wright Mills, in his *The Power Elite*, in contrast, neglect the important role of the intellectuals and social scientists in this broad new ruling class coalition. Francis, of course, does not follow Burnham in downplaying the crucial role of social scientists and intellectuals.

There *is* a flaw in this class analysis, however, that Sam Francis shares with Burnham, who in turn was obviously heavily influenced by the erroneous thesis of Berle and Means, in their highly influential work of 1932, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*. This thesis, used by the New Deal as an excuse for government intervention ranging from regulation to actual government takeover, held that while

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business firms in the nineteenth century were privately owned and therefore accountable to consumers in making profits and avoiding losses, and while earlier smaller corporations were similarly run by their property-owning stockholders, in the modern large corporation effective rule has been seized by the operating, technocratic managers. Managers who are accountable neither to shareholders nor consumers, and who therefore should be subject to governmental control.

While superficially attractive, the Berle-Means thesis does not hold water, for many reasons, ranging from the powerful weapon that shareholders have in selling their stock, lowering its price and thereby depriving managers of needed capital, to the modern weapons of takeover bids, proxy battles, and leveraged buyouts by which the stockholders can rise up and oust inefficient managers whose rule is not sufficiently profitable. More important for the Burnham thesis is the failure to realize that even if the small shareholder has little or no say in running the corporation, the *large* stockholders have always continued to play a dominant role in management, public policy, and in political affairs of the corporation. Corporate presidents only last for a few years in office; whereas the large owners and financiers, the Rockefellers, the Wall Street investment bankers, etc. are forever. The idea that the transient managers really run, for example, the various Standard Oil corporations rather than the Rockefeller family and its permanent familial allies, is akin to going up to view the gardens at the Rockefeller family compound at Pocantico Hills and concluding that the head gardener has seized the power of determining the choreography of the garden, the type of flowers, etc. from the impotent hands of the nominal estate owners, the Rockefeller family. But this of course is ultimately nonsense. Sure, the Rockefeller family is willing to turn over the operation of the garden to expert gardeners, indeed they are even "forced" by scale and division of labor to do so; but let Ma Rockefeller develop an allergy to some of the flowers, and those flowers disappear posthaste, else the family will pronto find itself another willing and eager head gardener.

Kissinger has been an almost lifelong vassal of Governor Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller and of the Rockefeller World Empire.

In short, the managers, the intellectuals, the PR men, are hired hands; often, of course, they are extremely influential. But they are only influential *so long as* their advice suits Big Daddy, the large corporate owners and financiers—the Rockefellers, the Goldman, Sachses, etc. No one has played a larger role in formulating modern American foreign policy than the almost universally venerated "Doctor" Henry Kissinger, but he played such a role not because he has a Ph.D., wrote a doctoral dissertation on Metternich, or once had a relatively minor post teaching at Harvard. He played that role because he has been an almost lifelong vassal of Governor Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller and of the Rockefeller World Empire. The real and decisive power is in the hands, not of the hirelings, but of those who sign their checks. What Burnham and Francis see as a successful revolution of the "managerial" classes has really been a successful coalition of those classes with certain "Eastern Establishment" sectors of Big Owners and Big Finance (i.e. Big stock and bond holders). Of course, anything can happen and it is certainly possible that, if collectivism keeps advancing, that eventually the bureaucratic-therapeutic-intellectual class will be powerful enough to use government power to liter-

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ally confiscate the Rockefeller-Wall Street crowd and seize total power. I am sure that some of the extreme Marxoid types, in their cups, cherish such designs. But that hasn't happened yet; and so far, we have to judge that the dominant, though less visible, partners in the coalition are still the Big Capitalists, not all of them, but those Eastern Establishment types who have long been playing the statist game.

In short, even though I am a moralist myself, one of my few criticisms of Sam Francis is not that he is a hard-boiled political analyst, but that, in this case, his analysis is not hard-boiled *enough*, that he doesn't penetrate beneath the facade of the Kissingers and the Brzezinskis to the underlying reality of their Rockefeller masters. One more example out of numerous possibilities will have to suffice: the foreign policy of the Eisenhower Administration (a man, by the way, whose nomination was engineered by the corporate-owning elite) was almost totally in the hands of three men: the brothers Dulles (John Foster as Secretary of State and Allen Welsh as head of a then almost totally unchecked Central Intelligence Agency) and, to a lesser extent, Undersecretary of State Christian Herter (the very model of a liberal Republican who was particularly beloved by the *New York Times*). So what are we to make of the striking but highly neglected fact that the brothers Dulles, in their private lives before assuming State power, were longtime top attorneys for Standard Oil and hence for the Rockefeller World Empire? Or that the beloved Herter was married to a Pratt, a family that has associated and invested closely with the Rockefellers since the beginnings of Big Oil in the late 19th century? Are these only coincidences? To believe *that* strains credulity, and can only be endorsed by what my old friend George Resch calls "believers in the accidental theory of history."

This view of political affairs has long been derided by Big Intellectuals and Big Media as a "conspiracy theory of history." There is no "theory" involved here, however; it is simply a willingness to see patterns that should be staring people in the face.

Facts and Morals

In theory and in strict logic, there need not be a clash between realistic political analysis and moral philosophy, between facts and ethics. In two ways: first, because moral and political philosophy can be solidly grounded in the hard underlying facts of human existence, which have long been called the body of "natural law." And then, the political theorist can engage in hard-boiled realistic analysis of the facts of the political world, of interests and clashing elites and ideas as weapons, in order to figure out the proper strategy, given the existing context, to change the laws or institutions so as to bring about the reign of sound moral principles. But while a conservative or a libertarian movement can theoretically proceed to integrate analysis and moral principles in this way, in practice it doesn't usually work that way. For one thing, most of us are not all-encompassing geniuses who can carry out this harmonious integration either in theory or in practice. The best we can usually do is to remember to keep both of these critical areas in mind.

In practice, too, tensions develop even within the writings of individual theorists between realistic analysis and desired goals, between facts and morality, and the theorists often separate themselves into different, or even warring, camps. Each side tends to irritate the other. Among the moralists, as noted above, there has been a tendency to ignore the facts of power, and the clashes of the interests of elites, while intoning the importance of "values." The analysts, for their part, often tend to lose the sense, or at least to convey the sense, of whether they have any values or ethical goals *at all*. As a corollary, they tend to lapse into historical determinism, such that certain ideas are "obsolete" because they are not in tune with the realities of interest or power. Probably the worst offender among the analysts was Jim Burnham; in his writings, it is very difficult to figure out

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whether he was in favor of, or opposed to, the Managerial Revolution, or still worse, whether he believed that the very raising of such a question was senseless in view of that revolution's alleged historical inevitability. One even gets the impression that sometimes Burnham *himself* didn't know whether he was for or against his Managerial Revolution. In his obituary essay on Burnham, "The Other Side of Modernism" (1987) Sam Francis notes that Burnham, aloof from the conservative movement even though long a top editor of *National Review,* was known in the movement not at all for the Managerial Revolution, for his hard-boiled analysis of elites and power, but for his hard, strategic anti-Communism and anti-Soviet foreign policy, which he wrote about in a column he significantly entitled "The Third World War."

But small wonder that this was Burnham's fate, for Burnham had really *nothing to say* to a political and ideological movement such as conservatism. Who can rouse the masses in behalf of hard-boiled power analysis? What are they supposed to *do*, what goals and principles are they supposed to achieve, to commit their lives to? Thus, Francis writes that "in one of the last columns he wrote prior to his stroke, he again eschewed the moralism and ideology that characterized both the Left and the Right," and then he quotes Burnham, "The primary goals at which I aim in this column, as in most of the books and articles I have written, are fact and analysis." Well, fine and dandy, but so what? How are fact and analysis supposed to inspire, invigorate, or guide a *movement?* Small wonder, then, that only Burnham's anti-Communism, which had nothing to do with his political analysis, was known to the conservative movement. *That* they could understand was relevant to their present and future actions; but *what else* in Burnham could be?

Many is the time, when reading articles of Sam Francis, that I both gasp and laugh aloud at the audacious turn of phrase.

What the realistic analysts often tend to overlook is that people, of course, act on their "interests," but that those "interests" cannot be narrowly defined as economic gain or gain of political power. If people hold moral theories and principles passionately enough, and they are often more passionate about their moral convictions than they are about their economic interests, then these moral principles *become* passionately held "interests" in their scale of values and in determining motivations for their actions.

The Franciscan Wit

I don't mean to tar Sam Francis with the Burnham brush, however. Even though Francis does not have a moral philosophy grounded in natural law, he is scarcely a soulless political analyst. Indeed, one of the fascinating aspects of "Franciscan" writing and of the Franciscan style is the moral passion that clearly animates his fervently held goals for fundamental social change. Out of the tension between his underlying moral passion and the hard-boiled analysis emerges his sparkling and pungent wit. For the junction of Sam Francis's moral seriousness, passionately held goals, and cold-eyed realistic analysis gives rise to some of the funniest—and at the same time most perceptive—writing around. Many is the time, when reading articles of Sam Francis, that I both gasp and laugh aloud at the audacious turn of phrase. True wit, of course, is highly serious, in the best sense.

Take for example, some of the marvelous passages in Francis's "The Cult of Dr. King" (1988, pp.152ff.) He begins by saying that King Day, even though only estab-

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lished as a federal public holiday in 1986, has already become "part of the cycle of mass indulgence through which the national economy annually revolves." Christmas itself has long been notorious for commercialism, Christmas "commemorating an event almost as important as the nativity of Dr. King." He goes on to note that, in contrast to the other nine national holidays, the King birthday is celebrated in "ways that are pretty much in keeping with its original purpose." Thus:

"While the other nine festivities are merely excuses for protracted buying and selling, three-day weekends with an attractive compadre, or orgies of eat-and-swill punctuated by football games, only the second Monday in January is the regular subject of solemn expatiations by the brahmins of the Republic as to what the day really means. Newspaper columnists, television commentators, and public school teachers, the nearest thing we have to a priesthood, devote at least a week to discussing Dr. King's life and achievements and their place in our national consciousness. Certainly they do not explore the lives of Jesus, George Washington, or Christopher Columbus with such piety, nor do they usually dedicate much time to reflecting on the less anthro-pormorphized occasions that celebrate national independence, public thanksgiving, or remembrance of Americans fallen in war for the fatherland. Only Dr. King seems to elicit effusions from the guardians of the public tongue, and, as in the rituals of the heathen gods of eld, woe to the blasphemous wretch who fails to bend the knee or touch the brow." (152-53)

Only Dr. King elicits "effusions from the guardians of the public tongue, and, as in the rituals of the heathen gods of eld, woe to the blasphemous wretch who fails to bend the knee."

What can I say but, Magnificent! and Wow!

But there are enormous differences between Francis and Burnham, not only in Francis's passionate moral principles and high mordant wit, but more importantly because while Burnham had nothing to offer to the movement except geopolitical anti-Sovietism, Sam Francis has a tremendous amount to offer —in particular his strategic vision, a vision in the service of highly principled paleo-conservative goals. And of course with Francis, in contrast to Burnham, there is never any doubt which side he is on. There is a charming moment in the Introduction when Francis has been describing the recent battles between the paleos, grouped around *Chronicles* magazine and the John Randolph Club, and the neoconservatives over the body and soul of the conservative movement. He then appends a footnote: "Lest there be any question as to where the author's sympathies lie in the Old Right-neo-conservative conflict, it should be noted that he is a contributing editor of *Chronicles* and a charter member of the John Randolph Club," (15). It is honorable of Sam to mention this, and reflects his sterling integrity, but it really wasn't necessary; it's gilding the lily.

The Franciscan Goals

What does Sam Francis want? Shining through the hard-headed analysis, the answer is clear: he is fervently opposed to the rule of the existing Left Liberal-neoconservative-Official Conservative managerial elite, and aims to replace that elite by a mass movement of working class and middle class Americans who would, as far as possible, return to leadership by the bourgeois elite. As far as possible, Francis wishes to return to the limited government, the checks and balances, the decentralized polity, the sanctity of private property, and the free market

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economy of the Old Republic, although given his historical perspective, he is pessimistic about the chance of going the full way down that road. He would like to abolish the welfare state and the therapeutic state, and to return America to a foreign policy devoted strictly to the American national interest, abandoning any form of global crusade.

Populist Strategy: The Problem of Willmoore Kendall

The postwar conservative movement was marked by a continuing debate on what amounts to the following problem: Taken all in all, *which group* tends to be more dangerous to the survival and the flourishing of liberty, decentralization and strictly limited government: the masses or the elites? While no group on the Old Right or on the newer Right of the 1960s or 1970s was worshipful of "democracy" or thought of it as any more than a process far less important than the content of public policy, the older "traditionalist" conservatives (or "trads") tended to trust the elites and to fear the masses. To the "populist" wing of the movement, however, the hearts and the instincts of the masses are generally sound, and the masses almost always suffer from being duped by the propaganda of the ruling elites who exploit and loot them. The major source of statism and loss of liberty, then, is the elite rather than the mass. To those who trust the mass and see the elites as the major danger, the obvious path to victory is to enlist the support of the masses, often by short-circuiting the malevolent elites.

Of all the leaders of conservative thought after World War II, the most decidedly populist was Willmoore Kendall, an early *National Review* editor and Bill Buckley's first mentor at Yale. Since Sam Francis is our outstanding current right-wing populist, it is not surprising that his essay on Kendall is particularly subtle, perceptive, and rewarding ("Prophet of the Heartland," 1986). The galloping trend of conservatism in the 1980s, a "seeming preoccupation with 'respectability' and 'credibility' and an inclination to dilute the expression of its commitments in return for acceptance by the establishment," "would surely have angered" Kendall, who unfortunately had died early in 1967. Kendall, adds Francis, "called himself an 'Appalachians-to-the-Rockies patriot,' and he was both temperamentally and philosophically incapable of living in peace with the dominant structures of the Northeast." (79). The basic problem with Kendall, however, and the reason that he provides no strategic guide to the current movement, was (apart from being an erratic loner) his fundamental and unrealistic short-run optimism. Sure that the heart and the ways of life of the masses were sound, Kendall, who grounded all conservatism on the persistence of those old American ways of life, failed to see that the Liberal enemy had taken over and had deeply encroached upon and altered the old ways. Having no abstract principles beyond those American mass folkways on which to base his conservatism, Kendall was in a sense forced to remain optimistic and to believe that Liberal rule was only evanescent and superficial.

Hence, instead of realizing or proclaiming that the Liberals had effected a revolution and that a populist counter-revolution was desperately necessary, Kendall was forced by his own theoretical framework to insist that everything was really fine and dandy. As a result, while Kendall, as a dedicated populist, should have been the first to sound the alarm and call for counter-revolution, he instead joined the other trads in only wishing to "conserve" existing institutions against potential menacing changes that might be instituted by the Left. Instead of becoming a radical "reactionary," Kendall was content, like his fellow conservatives, to continue as a stodgy "conservative," thereby getting trapped into trying to conserve a regime that was increasingly inimical to all the cherished principles of the Right-wing.

Thus, Francis points out that Kendall "emphasized the resistance of the main-

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stream to the forces of liberalism, and he did not dwell on the institutional entrenchments of liberalism in bureaucracy, universities, media, and corporations." "There is little suggestion" in Kendall, therefore, "that there was any great need to reverse what liberals had, by the 1960s succeeded in imposing." Indeed, "Kendall leaves the impression that liberalism had succeeded in very little of its crusade." (86) As a result, Kendall saw no need for the American heartland to adopt strategies to take back an America which he didn't see they had lost. And indeed, in view of Kendall's entrenchment in a conservatism as existing-ways-of-life, he would have had to change his entire conservative orientation to cope with such a drastic loss of power and of the culture to the liberal revolutionaries.

Populist Strategy: The Revolution Was

The crucial difference between Francis and Kendall is that Francis, independently of the great Old Rightist Garet Garrett, increasingly and piercingly realized, during the 1980s, that the typical conservative stance was obsolete and tragically counterproductive. For he saw that the Liberal Revolution was not a distant menace to be guarded against. The Revolution had already succeeded; Liberalism was in control of the institutions of power in America, and, more importantly, of its culture. As Garet Garrett, one of the most brilliant and one of the most gifted writers of the Old Right, of the Right of the 1930s through the 1950s, put it in the title of his startling essay of 1938: *The Revolution Was*. Garrett announced this truth to his uncomprehending conservative readers in his powerful opening paragraph: "There are those who still think they are holding the pass against a revolution that may be coming up the road. But they are gazing in the wrong direction. The revolution is behind them. It went by in the Night of Depression, singing songs to freedom."

[For an appreciative resurrection of the notable work of Garrett, see the passionately written tribute to the Old Right in the new book by the paleolibertarian Justin Raimondo, *Reclaiming the American Right*, 2nd printing, Burlingame, CA: Center for Libertarian Studies, 1993.]

If Garrett was right in 1938 that the Revolution had already been, and he was, how much more true is his analysis and warning now, as the Liberal Revolution has accelerated in several Great Leap Forwards, notably in the 1960s and in the 1980s-90s! Sam Francis came independently to this insight; and with that realization came the inevitable conclusion: that the necessary strategy for the conservative movement is *not* to wheedle and genuflect at the altar of the Liberal-dominated Inside-the-Beltway culture; *not*, as Official Conservatives and Liberatarians have both tried desperately to do, to win applause for respectability and credibility by the ruling elites. On the contrary, the proper strategy must be to rouse the benumbed and befuddled masses, exploited and virtually brainwashed by the Big Media and Big Opinion-Moulding elites, to cast off their chains and their blinders, to rise up and take their country back. In short, to adopt a fierce and determined strategy, both for the short and long runs, of a right-wing populist "counterrevolution."

Sam Francis's realization of this truth has intensified over the 1980s. *Beautiful Losers* is a collection of essays written over the decade 1981-1991; in the early years, upon the advent of the Reagan Administration, Francis was more optimistic about the immediate American scene and about the possibilities of the Reagan regime. In his most substantial essay from that early period, "Message from the MARs [Middle American Radicals]," published in the *New Right Papers* (1982), by a short-lived "New Right," Francis toys with the idea that a "Caesarist" President [e.g. Reagan] might be able to effect a rapid counter-revolution by using his power to aid the middle-class masses by destroying the bureaucratic-managerial elites of the executive branch. But by the end of the Reagan era,

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Reagan had proved a weak reed, and Official Conservatives, led by the neocons, had surrendered to the Liberal Culture and therefore advanced the entrenched rule of the Liberal elites. Learning from that hard-won experience, Sam Francis returned to his Burnhamite roots, and, in "Imperial Conservatives?" (1989) he recalled the importance of the Old Right's overriding emphasis on the dangers of Caesarism and of the Imperial Presidency. Congress, in contrast to current conservative propaganda, as flawed as it is, is a crucial check upon a runaway and dictatorial President. The Founding Fathers realized, for that reason, that Congress should be more powerful than the executive. In this essay, Sam Francis recalls that this was the burden of the Old Right's last great swan song in the Bricker Amendment to restrict the treaty-making power and the presidential role in foreign policy. Burnham had pointed this out in his *Congress and the American Tradition* (1959).

There was another problem with this Caesarist strategy. The President serves as head of the executive bureaucracy, and even a more determined President than the somnolent rhetorician Reagan will end up becoming absorbed by, and therefore a figurehead for, the mighty bureaucratic and statist machine. For a head of state to really overthrow and decimate the existing administrative power structure would require the steely determination and the cadre organization of a Lenin or a Pol Pot. Not only does Ronald Reagan not fit the bill; there is no likely candidate looming on the horizon.

By the middle and later 1980s, then, from which most of the essays in this book derive, the body of developed Franciscan thought had emerged: as analyst and strategist for a right-wing populist counter-revolution. A more subtle shift has also occurred within this basic paradigm, one that has developed even further in the three years since the last of these essays was written. More and more, Sam Francis has been shifting his emphasis from Paretian elite analysis, toward advocacy of the counter-revolutionary strategy of coping with these hard realities. Well, of course, this progression makes logical sense: first comes the analysis of what's been going on in the world; and then the counseling of a strategy of what to do about it. Or, if we may paraphrase Marx: first, Franciscan philosophy undertook to understand the world; but now, its task is to change it.

The Power of Right-Wing Populism: Joe McCarthy

The Left (here including all variety of Marxists and neocons) understands strategy. In contrast to conservatives and libertarians, who seem to think that focus on strategy is somehow unclean, Marxist groups spend almost none of their substantial time and energy discussing principles or ultimate goals, and almost all of it on strategy. Certainly, considering the absurdity, monstrousness, and unworkability of the ideas that they have had to work with, they have been remarkably successful: after all, the Stalinist branch ran half the world for the good part of a century.

Since the Left, then, tends to be far shrewder and more knowledgeable strategists than the Right, it behooves us to pay attention to *which* Right-wing strategy most frightens and agitates Leftists and Liberals; what sends them up the wall? Sober nuts-and-bolts appeals to Beltway elites for marginal reform? Or passionate, emotional appeals to the masses for radical change? Exclusive concentration on marginal tax cuts, or narrow changes in health proposals? Or, calls to "take back our culture"? Technical marginalia, or raising the standard of ferocious opposition on basic morals and culture? To ask these questions is to answer them.

What really presses the hot buttons of the Left, then, is not the latest tome from the American Enterprise Institute, but the rousing speeches of a Pat Buchanan. When they call you "fascist," "neofascist," "xenophobe," "racist," and all the rest of the smear litany, then you know that you've struck a nerve; if they call you "respectable," a

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"genuine conservative," etc., then you know that they're welcoming anther lapdog. Pressing those hot buttons is when you know that your counterrevolutionary strategy is striking paydirt.

Because of his analytic and strategic framework, Sam Francis is virtually the only conservative since the mid-1950s to understand and appreciate the phenomenon that was Joe McCarthy. *Why* was Joe McCarthy so universally hated and reviled by the *entire* Left (from Communist to Trotskyite to Menshevik to Liberal to Neoconservative to Official Republican)? So hated that his very name has become a generic word for social and political evil? ["McCarthyism"] *Why*? Because he was anti-Communist? Of course not; so were most of the above groups. Because he made a few numerical mistakes? Please. He was so hated and reviled that he *had* to be brought down and smashed because, more than any other American political figure of the twentieth century, he, even though confusedly and inchoately and with no organization, was effectively rousing the masses to condemn and perhaps to overthrow the Liberal Establishment elite. The *New York Times* once attacked McCarthy because he was "destroying the morale of the executive branch" of government. But suppose you think that that is one of the best things that you can do? "Destroying the morale" of the executive branch is the first step to destroying its power over our economy, our culture, and our very lives.

In his passionate, perceptive, and altogether remarkable essay on McCarthy ("The Evil that Men Do: Joe McCarthy and the American Right" (1986), Francis points out the oddity of such a massive and persistent hatred of McCarthy "when it is recalled that the senator was never accused or convicted of any crime, never betrayed his country, caused no wars, perpetrated no atrocities, and after 1946 never lost an election." (139). Francis then contrasts this "evil that McCarthy *didn't* do," with the atrocities and evil actually committed by men whom Americans then and still revere (FDR, Eisenhower, Truman, Kennedy, et al.)

These deeds, adds Francis, were "among the most evil things in our history, and most of us have forgotten them and even wonder if they really happened or if anyone really did them." This "evil that never happened, that other men didn't do," Francis writes powerfully and movingly, "died with them and lies interred with the bones of its victims—not hundreds or thousands but millions—whose ghosts are never invoked and who have largely disappeared from human memory." Francis concludes with this marvelous passage: "but if there is a Bar of Justice beyond this world and beyond human memory, I would rather stand before it and answer for the evil that Joe McCarthy did than for the evil that he didn't do." (141)

So why specifically did the Establishment work with might and main to destroy Joe McCarthy? Precisely because McCarthy was primarily concerned not with communism in government but "with the relationship between communism and the elite... and because his concern necessarily involved a militant challenge to and a rejection of the elite..." And because "the great virtue of McCarthy" was his "ability to communicate to the average American what the[se] bonds were..." In consequence, "it was McCarthy's accomplishment to infuse into the American Right the militancy of a counterrevolu-

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tionary movement..." Hence, the elite "launched a massive political and verbal counter-attack upon him, crushed him and the movement he created, and transformed him into the demonic embodiment of evil that moves among us even today." For McCarthy's "very existence was a threat to their interests and power and was ultimately incompatible with their dominance in the United States" (141-42, 148).

In his Introduction, Francis thoughtfully adds that "Lacking a more accurate conceptual framework for his instinctual understanding of the elite and its apparatus of power, McCarthy relied on the charge of 'communism' as a label by which to challenge the legitimacy of the elite. Hence, his constant invocation of populist and antiestablishment imagery in his rhetoric, and hence his actual success in mobilizing for a time a mass movement that perceived the revolutionary imperatives that lay at the heart of the American power structure in the postwar era." (16)

Francis doesn't detail the shameful way in which McCarthy's supporters, the Buckleys and the Schlamms, dropped him like a hot potato as soon as they saw the dimensions of his defeat. It was the first of many occasions when the quest for respectability by the Official Right was to triumph over their sense of honor or justice. No movement can succeed or deserves to succeed that does not rescue and succor its wounded.

Ideas as Weapons: The Path of Gramsci

In his scintillating essay on egalitarianism, first published by the Mises Institute ("Equality as a Political Weapon," 1991), Sam Francis gently chides the rest of us on the Right who have been patiently and thoroughly demolishing the idea of egalitarianism, using arguments from philosophy, history, sociobiology, and anthropology. Effectively quoting a passage from Pareto, Francis points out that the doctrine of equality is so manifestly absurd that no one really believes it. As Francis puts it, "no one, save perhaps Pol Pot and Ben Wattenberg, really believes in it, and no one, least of all those who profess it most loudly, is seriously motivated by it." What *does* motivate its champions? As Pareto and Orwell both realized, the yen to replace one set of inequalities by another set biased in their own favor. "The real meaning of the doctrine of equality," Francis maintains, "is that it serves as a political weapon, to be unsheathed whenever it is useful for cutting down barriers, human or institutional, to the power of those groups that wear it on their belts...." (209)

The insight that ideas are weapons and the understanding of the importance of those ideas to the domination by some groups over others, enables Francis to complete his strategic vision for right-wing counterrevolution by invoking in this same paper on equality the lessons of the noted Italian Communist of the 1920s, Antonio Gramsci. Marxists and left-liberals in the West, steeped in dialogue over strategy, over how to achieve power, have long been fascinated by the teachings of Gramsci, and of the Gramscian route to power. Gramsci early realized that the route to Communist power in the nations of Western Europe and the United States would have to be different from that in less advanced countries. In such countries, where the State was already dominant in the lives of the citizenry, Marxists could rely on the forces of the proletariat or of the peasantry to seize state power and to use the State to transform society from the top. But in the West, not so much because of democratic forms but because of economic advance, there is a rich texture of "civil society," of non-state institutions that are in many ways more influential and determining than the State itself. This important set of institutions is the "culture," the set of opinion-forming and opinion-moulding ideas and institutions such as the media, the schools, institutes, the arts and various intellectual suppliers that establish "cultural hegemony" over the society and ultimately over the

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State. Gramsci counselled that, in the Western countries, the only sure route to power by the Left is to attain "cultural hegemony" by means of, in the famous phrase, "a long march through the institutions."

This is precisely the path, whether conscious of Gramsci or not, that Left-liberals have used in their long but highly successful route to power. Capture elite universities, foundations, respectable media, organs of influential opinion, mould social attitudes by means of art, fiction, and movies, and State power will flow easily after that. And even when State power has not been achieved, opponents of the Left can do nothing when they succumb, as they did so easily in the Reagan years, to the cajoleries and seductive temptations of attaining respectability and credibility in American culture. And after the defeat of the New Left in the late 1960s because of its infantile use of violence, the New Leftists consciously determined to engage on the "long march," to "work within the system." *This* kind of "long march," of course, is far more pleasant and profitable than that engaged in by Mao tse-Tung in the 1930s. Instead of hardship and starvation, there pour forth cushy perks of law school, top law positions, and professorships in elite departments of social science, to say nothing of federal grants subsidizing plays and paintings that no one in his right mind would wish to patronize.

We must Take Back America from the Left/Liberal Neocon/ Official Con elites.

We come around, then, to the realization that Sam Francis does not really dismiss the importance and the power of ideas. He sees, indeed, that ideas have consequences and that some ideas have more consequences than others. Especially those ideas that get adopted, and those ideas that will get adopted are those that can serve as mighty and powerful weapons in social struggle. What Sam Francis is interested in is forging and spreading ideas that can serve effectively the human interests and emotions of the great body of the American working and middle classes to serve the heartland in the vital struggle to throw off the malignant elites who dominate and loot them. To serve them, in short, in the great requisite struggle of our time: to Take Back America, its polity, its economy, its culture, its old and formerly cherished freedoms and property rights, from the Left/Liberal/Neocon/Official Con elites that have lied and cozened their way to power.

Fight the Blackout!

Beautiful Losers is a remarkable volume that itself can serve as one of those crucial weapons. It is a profound book that can and should be read and cherished on many levels. It can be read quickly for its sparkling turn of phrase and incisive, mordant wit. It can and should be read and pondered again, mulled over and savored, for this book is so illuminating of underlying realities and strategic insights that it, almost single-handed, can be the tinderbox that will light the spark to rouse the American people against their masters, and show them how to effect the long march through the institutions that will bring about the right-wing populist counterrevolution. Except that I would add that the ideas of the Right, of the Old Republic, not only can appeal to the interests and emotions of the American people, but that being true, good, and just, they will also appeal to their sense of justice and honor and virtue and rational insight into the nature of the world. Hence, in contrast to the very long march of the Left, the countermarch of the Right through

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the institutions can be a great deal shorter.

But the march of the genuine Right can only be short if we are allowed to discover *Beautiful Losers*. Naturally, the shrewd and cunning cultural hegemonists, the masters of the magazines, steeped in strategy, realize this all too well. As a result, as in the case of Paul Gottfried's *The Conservative Movement*, even though this book is published by a respected press, a nearly total blackout has been imposed upon it.

Beautiful Losers came out last August, and as far as I know *only one* periodical has deigned to notice or to review this book. Here is a shameful blot on the American media who are always trumpeting their devotion to "freedom of inquiry" and the "right to know." The one review was in the *Washington Times* (October 24), an organ that could hardly ignore the book since it serves as the home base for Francis's syndicated column. But how did the reviewer, Professor Robert L. Spaeth, treat this volume? While recognizing its power, Spaeth simply denounces the author in emotive adjectives: "nasty," "cruel and unusual," with a "rage" that is "less refreshing than acidic." It's the old elite ploy: if you can't refute the message, attack the messenger.

In summing up the battle between the paleocons and the neocons, Sam Francis writes correctly that "On the whole, the Old Right generally had the brains, but the neocons had the money...." (14). As a result, by the end of the 1980s, the neocons had become dominant on the Right.

Beautiful Losers is itself a striking example of who indeed has the brains. We must not let the money power suppress brain power! It is essential to combat that money power, to battle against the ruling elites, and the best way to do so is to buy, read, ponder, and savor this book. Read the book, buy it for your friends, for Sam Francis is our Pareto, our Gramsci, and we must not allow him to be suppressed. For if this book is read and disseminated and understood, Sam Francis can be the Tom Paine, the Patrick Henry of the next American Revolution that will at last redeem the glorious promise of the first. ■

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